HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
FROM THE
ANDREW PRESTON PEABODY
FUND

A

MESSAGE

FROM THE

Spirit of the Lord

To the People called

ANABAPTISTS,

AND

To the rest of the Sects who are scattered up and down these Nations, and in the *ARMY*, that they may read and consider why the Lords Controversie is against them, and that they may understand what the Lords Purpose is concerning them.

HOW is my bowels filled with grief, and my heart compassed about with sorrow? Wo is me for you, I am even undone for your sakes who despise reproof, and reject the counsel of the Holy One; Surely you are a rebellious house, and a gain-saying people, saith the Lord: All the day long have I stretched out my hands unto you, and visited you in loving kindness, and called upon you to return; but you have stopped your ears, & hardened your hearts against me, saith the Lord; You have despised my *Messengers*, and set at nought those who have been sent unto you, and have not regarded my Word: How many of my servants have been as a *Sign*, a by-word, and as a proverb and a reproach amongst you? And you have not consi-

 dered

dered the evil day that is to come upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth: Why had you not seen? Why had you not beheld my goings out in my Servants in this day, even amongst all the Sons of men? How have I made them to bear the iniquities of this Nation, and have suffered the Rulers thereof to afflict them, even from day to day, and from time to time? yet have they not ceased to warn this Nation in their Towns and Villages, in their Markets, and in their Streets; in their Goals, and in their Assemblies: How many of my Servants have dyed in prison, and you have not visited them, even for the Word of God, and for the Testimony of Jesus, even the exercise of their pure consciences? These things have not been done in a corner, but in the sight of the Sun, before your eyes, and you have not laid it to heart, but ready to add affliction to their Bonds, and to join your hands with their persecutors in your Bookes and Pamphlets, in your preachings and pretended prayers, and in your places of Justice; and you have strengthened the hands of the Wicked, and persecuted, slandered & reproached my Servants.

Wherefore thus saith the Lord, I am now arisen in jealousie even for the meek of the earth, & I will be avenged of my adversaries, and plead the cause of my despised remnant, even by sword and by fire wil I plead with my enemies; I wil overturn their counsels, and wil blow upon their whole strength, and they shall n ot be: But as for your parts, you have had a day, and a price put into your hands, but had not hearts to use it, you forgot me saith the Lord, and did not remember the cause of the innocent, but every one sought his own honor and his own advantage, and forgot me and the cause of my people: Therefore did I cause your Sun to set at noon, even in the midst of your day, and did deliver you up into the hands of your enemies, even without a Sword or a Spear; but by my own might and power, that you might know that I am God, and that I can do whatsoever I will in the Kingdoms of men. Look back now, & see if your Fathers could ever remember, or the generations that are past could ever declare, that I the Lord did greater wonders, or that my Arm hath brought stranger things to pass then your eyes have seen, & your ears have heard. But will all this awake you? Will all this make

you

you to consider? Why do you not break off your sins by repentance, and turn unto me (saith the Lord) that *I* may heal your backslidings, and wash away your sins? What advantage is it unto you, that you set your selves against me, and devise mischief against my chosen? What do you reap unto your selves to make peace with your enemies, to destroy my Heritage? Surely this people have forgotten me, and they trust unto an arm of flesh, and a number of men, and their own fear overcomes them: Can you not look back, & call to your remembrance the former dayes, how *I* was with you in the day of distress, how I girded you with strength, and made you a terror to your enemies, even to them unto whom now you are become servants? And why is all this come to pass? Because you vowed a vow unto me in your distress, in that day when many enemies had compassed you about, from whom I delivered you; but you forgot the vow & the promise that you had made, and thought not upon my Cause, and the Cause of my people, but rejoiced and sate down in the spoil of your enemies, and corrupted your selves with those things, until your hearts became fat, and you fill'd and corrupted with all the abominations of them which were cast out before you, so that no deliverance was wrought in the earth, but like treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously; and so your reward must be according to your works.

And now what is man that you should trust in him, or the sons of men that you should regard them, and forget me, saith the Lord? Yet once more return, return unto me, that I may once more build you up, and not pluck you down; Humble your selves before me, and consider of your backslidings. Consider that ye have forgotten me, and trusted to lying vanities; and slight not the day of your visitation, neither despise my Messengers, nor reproach my Servants; for he that despiseth them, despiseth me; for they are as deare unto me as the apple of mine eye; & whosoever riseth up against them, shall be confounded; but he that blesseth them, shall be blessed; because they have chosen me to be their feare, and they have not sought themselves, nor defiled themselves with the World nor its vanities, nor its fading and perishing glory but have walked before me with an upright heart in the midst of

a perverse generation, amongst whom they have been as sheep for the slaughter, and have been killed even all the day long; & who have pleaded their cause, or who have stood up in their defence? But even all people, all professors, and all powers have combined together to root out their Name, and to blot out their memorial from the earth, had not my power upheld them, and my own Arm made bare for their deliverance: How often had they been devoured by the teeth of their adversaries, and by the jaws of their cruel & oppressing enemies? had not I arisen for them, and put my hook into the nose, and my bridle into the teeth of their enemies, and turned them backwards, confounded their enterprises, overturned Rulers, and Powers, and Armies; yea reproved Kings for their sakes: And this let it be known unto you, He that blesseth them, shall be blessed; but he that curseth them, shall not prosper; For, for their sakes is all this come to pass, because I will make them the joy of many nations; and they shall tread upon the High Places of the earth. And although I may suffer them to be tryed even as Gold in the fire, that they may be purged and purified, that their beauty may shine out of obscurity, & their praise may return unto me; yet will I never forsake them, my loving kindness will I never take from them, but will return unto them in tender mercy, and in the midst of the fire will I be with them, and my power and my presence shall accompany them, and I will plead with all their adversaries, & consume their enemies, and will crown them with dominion in the sight of them that rise up against them.

Wherefore once more this is a call and a warning unto you to return unto me, and to seek me with your whole heart, that you may not for ever be a prey to your enemies, nor that the rod of the wicked should for ever remain upon the back of the righteous; wherefore if you will return unto me, and consider of your backslidings and repent of the evil of your former doings, I will yet make use of you for my glory, and for my own Name sake, that this *Egyptian* Power, even *Pharaoh* & all his Host may be overwhelmed, that I may cause my righteous Branch to prosper, and to spread, and to go over the earth, and to give unto my chosen the Land which I have promised unto them, even a Land that flows with Milk and Honey.

There-

Therefore now arise, and put on Courage and Boldness, and fear not the face of your enemies; for though they be many in number, yet I am the Lord, and all power and might is in my hand: And every one of you make war in righteousness against the enemies of your own souls which are within you, (to wit) the lusts that warrs in your members, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is my Word in your hearts, which discerneth the lusts in your hearts, and every thought, and every intent in your hearts; and by this sword shall you become more than conquerors; this will cut down your lust, your pride, ambition, and self-seeking; your covetousness, and your wantonness, and all such abomination, for which my hand is against you; And this my Word is within you, and this must purge and purifie you, if ever you are purged; even that within you, which lets you see your abominations, which have caused me to hide my face from you, and to visit you in judgment: and when you have repented of the evil of your waies, and are returned unto that which lets you see your self-seeking, proud, persecuting, covetous, worldly, treacherous, deceitful spirit; that by the same which lets you see it, you may be humbled in my presence, and return unto your first love, that which first visited you for your sins, that by it you may be truly purged, and nay truly deny your selvs, and not seek the worlds glory, but my glory; and not your own Interest, but the *Good Old Cause*, the Cause of my People: That truth and righteousness may flourish in these Nations, and that the Land may be swept of evil-doers, and that all superstition and Idolatry may be rooted out, and all oppression and tyranny amongst people may be clean done away. If you thus return unto me in the uprightness of your hearts, then will I return unto you, and my presence shall be with you, and your strength shall return as in the daies of your youth; and I will yet prosper you, and you shall take root downward, and bear fruit upward, and your flesh shall be fresh as the flesh of a child, and you shall be the joy of many Nations. But if you refuse to return unto me, and to seek me with your whole heart, and to be obedient unto my voice, and not take counsel at me, but follow the counsel of your

own

own hearts, and offer unto me your wonted hypocritical praiers and faſtings, and your hearts after your covetouſneſs, envie, pride, ſelf-ſeeking, and vain-glory; though you may make many praiers, yet I will not hear, neither will I anſwer, but ſuffer a lying ſpirit to go forth amongſt you, which ſhall deceive you, and ſpeak peace when there is no peace, and you ſhall be lifted up to that end you may be deſtroied; for I will give you into the hands of your enemies, and they ſhall do unto you according unto that which is in their hearts, and my loving kindneſs will I for ever take from you, and my habitation will I utterly remove from amongſt you, and nothing but miſery ſhall attend you, even one wo upon another, untill you are ſcattered and driven away, confounded and conſumed from the face of the earth; but my choſen will I deliver in that day, I will cover them, and I will hide them under the hollow of my hand, and my arm ſhall compaſs them about, becauſe they have choſen me to be their fear, and have had regard unto my Word, and have walked in my Statutes, and obſerved my Ordinances, and have deſpiſed the glory, honor, riches and preferment of this world, even for me, and for my kingdoms ſake, for whom I have ordained a kingdom everlaſting and eternal, where all the power of darkneſs ſhall not touch them.

Therefore take heed unto the Word which I have ſpoken, and no longer be of a proud and perverſe ſpirit, nor of an uncircumciſed heart; but let your ears be open unto reproof, that you may learn righteouſneſs, that in truth you may be eſtabliſhed, that my power and my preſence may be with you, that you may ariſe as a Lion out of his thicket, or as a Giant refreſhed with wine; That you may plead my cauſe with the men of the earth, that the Whore which hath made all Nations drunk with the cup of her fornications, and hath drunk the blood of the Saints and Martyrs, that you may give unto her double, even blood to drink; and that her children may be daſht againſt the ſtones: for the hour of her judgment is come, and great *Babylon* is now come in remembrance before the Lord, and the cup of his fury and indignation is in his hand, which ſhall be powred out without mixture, and the dregs thereof ſhall ſhe drink:

for

for now is the Angel gone forth with the everlasting Gospel to preach, saying, *Fear GOD, and give Glory to Him*, wherefore blessed and happy shall he be that receives the everlasting Gospel of GOD, who are brought into his fear that keeps clean their hearts; who gives the glory unto God, who do not seek glory unto themselves, nor seek honor unto themselves; for the Lord God is arisen to stain the glory of all flesh, and the loftiness of man shall be abased, and the haughtiness of man shall be laid low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted: For he will overturn, overturn, overturn, until he comes whose right it is, and he will give it him; for the Kingdom and the Government shall be his; for the Lambs-day is come, and his Kingdom and his Government shall be established: Though all the powers of darkness rise up against him, yet shall the Lamb and the Saints have the victory, though *Gog* and *Magog* join together in battel against him.

Therefore be ye warned, and take heed of giving your power unto the Beast, and the false Prophet; for the wrath and vengeance of the Lord is against him, and the day of *Babylons* destruction is near, in which all her Merchants that have traded with her shall weep and howl; for none shall buy their wares any more, saying; Alas, alas, for that great City is faln by which so many were made rich through her Merchandize; for now is the Lord arisen to uncover her skirts, and to make her shame and her nakedness appear in the sight of all men. Therefore be not of a fearful heart, but be valiant for the Lord, for he will bring mighty things to pass, such as your eyes hath not seen, nor your ears heard, nor hath entered into your hearts to believe; for he is working a Work and a Wonder; the understanding of the Wise shall be confounded, and the Wisdom of the prudent shall be hid; for the Lord hath purposed, and he will certainly bring it to pass; for he hath seen, he hath seen the affliction of his people, and his eye hath beheld the cruelty of their enemies, & all their purposes are before him, and his soul hath pittyed his remnant, and his anger is kindled against his adversaries, and the day of their recompence is near, wherein he will reward them, even as they thought to do unto his chosen; and their own mischief which they imagined in their own hearts, even with the

same

ſame ſhall their own bowels be filled; that as they have thirſted for, and greedily deſired the blood of the innocent, even ſo ſhall it be done unto them. The Lord hath ſpoken, and it ſhall ſurely come to paſs.

And now take heed unto your ſelves, and let the fall of others be a warning unto you, and ſee you build upon a right foundation; for there is nothing but truth and righteouſneſs ſhall ſtand, all other buildings ſhall certainly be overthrown: Therefore in humility and meekneſs conſider with your ſelves, that the Lord hath not left himſelf without a Witneſs in the hearts of every one of you, that the people who have been deſpiſed and hated, reproached and cruelly intreated, hath not been ſo dealt withall for any evil that they have done, but for bearing a true and faithfull teſtimony for the Lord, againſt all the pride, ambition and vain-glory of this wicked and untoward Generation, and againſt all the ſuperſtitious, Idolatrous and vain worſhips, and againſt all the hireling, greedy, devouring, Idol, dumb Shepherds; and againſt all the vain heathenish cuſtoms, faſhions and traditions that hath been ſet up by the will and pride of man, contrary to the Scriptures, and out of the fear of God; and for keeping Chriſts Command. Hath not this been the cauſe why we have been hated, perſecuted, impriſoned, ſlandered, murthered, and all manner of evill done unto us; becauſe we are not of this world, even as he is not of this world, but hath choſen us out of the world, to bear teſtimony againſt the deeds thereof that they are evil? Therefore try now and throughly examine the ground and reaſon of all the hatred, evil-ſpeaking and dealing that hath been againſt us, And in moderation, and the fear of God, without prejudice, ſee wherein our practice is not agreeable with the Scriptures, and let not your minds be any longer blinded through an evil heart of unbelief; but let the long-ſuffering of our God lead you to repentance; And not by reſiſting his Spirit to hardneſs of heart, and his righteous judgments overtake you, and there be no remedy.

The 12d. of the laſt
Month, 1659. JOHN COLLENS.

LONDON, Printed by *M.I.* for *Robert Wilſon*, at the ſign of the *black-ſtraad-Eagle* in *Martins le Grand*, 1660.